

# Big Tech sued by Seattle schools over mental health 'crisis'

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Seattle has filed a lawsuit against big tech companies including Meta for allegedly causing mental harm, depression and anxiety among students.

The public school district in the US city of Seattle has filed a lawsuit against big tech companies for allegedly causing mental harm, depression and anxiety among students.

The complaint, which was filed on Friday, targets Meta-owned Facebook and Instagram, but also Google, Snapchat, YouTube as well as Chinese-owned TikTok.

Public school officials said they are "holding [social media companies](#) accountable for the harm they have wreaked on the social, emotional, and [mental health](#)" of students.

"The increase in suicides, attempted suicides, and mental-health related [emergency room visits](#) is no coincidence," a statement said.

Local and state governments in the United States have increasingly gone out on their own to fight big tech companies as nationwide action remains blocked by a politically divided US congress and successful lobbying by big tech firms.

To the frustration of critics, tech giants are facing tougher laws and regulation outside the country on protecting privacy and competition as well as ensuring standards on content moderation.

Seattle School Superintendent Brent Jones said "[young people](#) everywhere face unprecedented, learning and life struggles that are amplified by the negative impacts of increased [screen time](#), unfiltered content, and potentially addictive properties of social media."

"We are confident and hopeful that this lawsuit is the first step toward reversing this trend for our students, children throughout Washington state, and the entire country," he added.

In the complaint, the school district accuses the companies of having exploited "the psychology and neurophysiology of their users so that they spend more and more time on their platforms...creating a mental health crisis among young Americans."

In a statement, Meta did not comment on the specifics of the case but Global Head of Safety Antigone Davis said the company wants "teens to be safe online."

"We'll continue to work closely with experts, policymakers and parents on these important issues," Davis said.

In an email, Google said it had "invested heavily in creating safe experiences for children across our platforms."

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